Volume XCIX No. 9 November 30, 1973 40 cents

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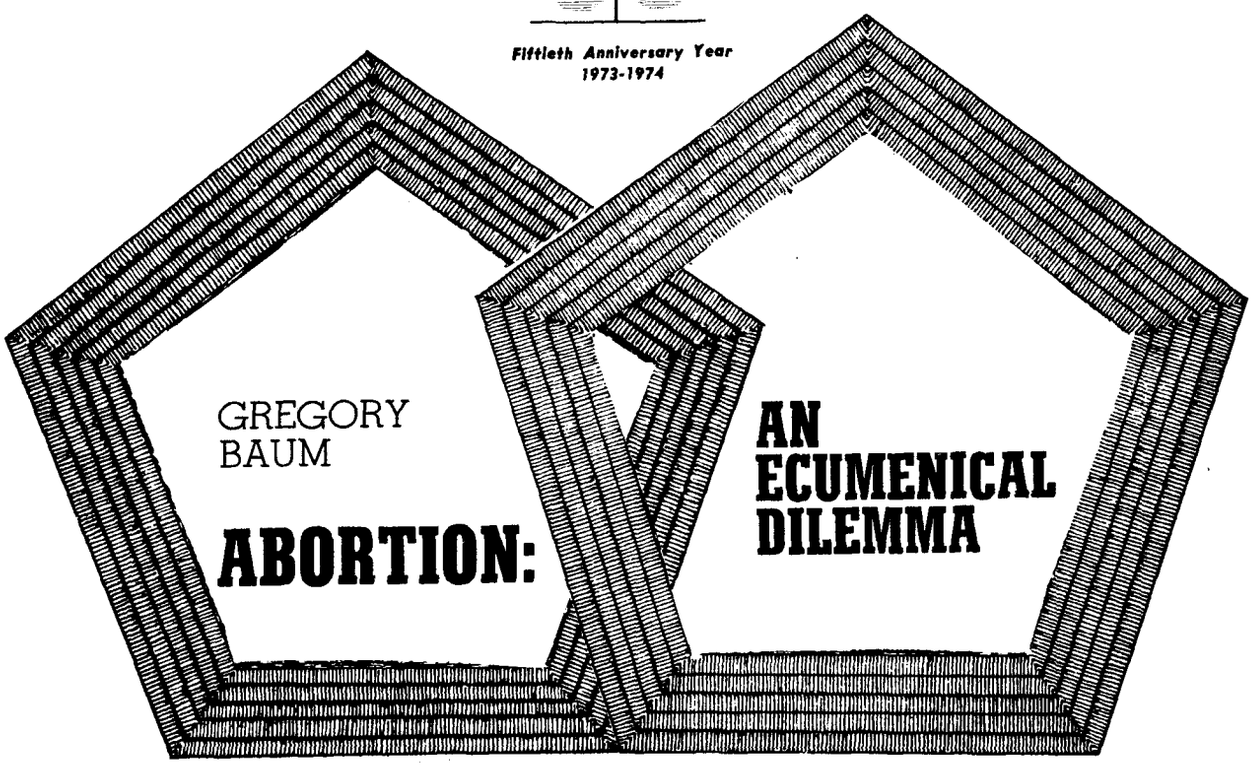

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MANAGING A TIGHTENED WORLD
PETER STEINFELS

ENCORE IN CHICAGO
DENNIS D. FISHER

LEFT TURN IN THE NETHERLANDS
PETER FREIBERG

AFTER VATICAN IV
MICHAEL MURRAY

CHABROL CONTINUED
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

A VISIT TO GREENELAND
DENIS DONOGHUE

REVIEWS:
TODD GITLIN, EDWARD GLYNN, ROBERT PHILLIPS

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NEWS & VIEWS

Saving the Empire

Individual Portuguese churchmen have displayed some moral spunk and opposed the harsh government policies in the African territories. The Bishop of Vila Cabral, for instance, spoke out against official crimes in Angola; the Bishop of Nampula dared to defend imprisoned missionaries; the Mozambique episcopate condemned massacres the government sought to camouflage.

But the cards are stacked against the clerics courageous, according to *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, by two Portuguese-Holy See pacts that in effect establish the "collaboration" of the church with the maintenance of the Portuguese empire.

The pacts are the Concordat of 1940, and the Missionary Agreement of 1941. Under their terms, the activity of the Portuguese missions is the only one in the whole Catholic Church not controlled by the Curia's Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. These Portuguese missions are in effect placed in the service of the Portuguese colonial scheme, in exchange for which they are "considered institutions of utility to the empire and of great civilizing import."

The consequences, during the 10-years' colonial wars: the silence of hierarchs on many Portuguese excesses; official denials by this or that bishop of massacres whose actuality has been well established; propagandizing by some bishops in favor of the "anti-Communist war" — in other words, in favor of repression of the people's aspirations for independence.

Not surprising, therefore, is the scene reproduced in *Informations* from the journal *Vivante Afrique*. It shows a bishop in full episcopal regalia posed atop a tank, over a caption reading: "The Patriarch of Lisbon extols the Portuguese missionary epic."

The Church Struggling

In a *Washington Post* article timed to coincide with the annual bishops' meeting in the nation's capital, Colman McCarthy writes affectionately of the people "hanging in" and the institution they're aiming to preserve. His concluding paragraphs:

"In the American empire, the need is still great, and no doubt all of the 250 bishops convening this week would like the church to be a 'living creative force.' But a tactical problem persists. In Bernanos' classic, *The Diary of a Country Priest*, the old pastor speaks of it: 'We've got to make room for everything and everybody—goats included.' And indeed, faithful to an impressive universality, the church does make room. In today's American Catholicism, membership includes such starkly dissimilar believers as Daniel Berrigan and Gen. Alexander Haig, Cesar Chavez and William F. Buckley, Rev. Robert Drinan (a Jesuit Democrat in Congress who wants Richard Nixon impeached) and the Rev. John McLaughlin (a Jesuit Republican who is a Nixon speechwriter), Dorothy Day and former General Motors chairman James Roche, Yogi Berra and Sargent Shriver, Andy Warhol and Mike Mansfield, Jeanne Dixon and Helen Hayes. Has any mother except mother church ever produced children as diverse as these?

"Such a question is a profound mystery, and next to it such traditional mysteries of faith as the Trinity or the Resurrection pale. But the diversity among Catholics is more a sociological puzzle than theological. The institutional church is meant to be kept going, not kept perfect. This thought sustains the simpler souls in the church and invariably it is these—the anonymous sisters and pastors—who stay committed to the hard works of faith like running the church's hospitals, orphanages, schools and parish social programs. The persistent survival of the institutional church, goats and all, suggests that Vatican II did not do away with the timeless need for the corporal works of mercy and rescue. It may have made them less glamorous—pure religion always hides out in reality's drab corners—but not less crucial."

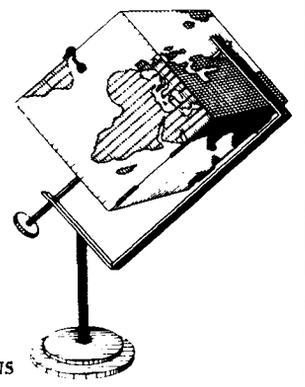
A New Friend

Debuting auspiciously under the editorship of Murray Polner, a long-time contributor to these pages, is *Present Tense*, a quarterly of world Jewish affairs.

Present Tense appears under the sponsorship of the American Jewish Committee, which also husbands *Commentary*. According to its statement of purpose, *PT* is intended to be "journalistic and popular in style." But if the first issue and Polner's background are indicators, it will be substantively intellectual.

The lead item in the inaugural edition features the *Washington Post*'s Stephen S. Rosenfeld speculating that Egyptian President Sadat launched his recent offensive against Israel "not only to improve Egypt's bargaining position with a persuasive show of force but, if that failed, to discredit his hardliners with a defeat."

A year's subscription to *PT* is $6 (165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y., 10022).



LNS

West German Flap

Hans Küng isn't the only cleric in Germany who's feeling a bit of hot water. There's also Bishop Wilhelm Kempf of Limburg in Hesse.

The papal delegate to West Germany has called for his dismissal in a letter to the Vatican Secretary of State.

The bill of particulars against Kempf: reopening debate on priestly celibacy and the ordination of married men; opening a counseling center for conscientious objectors (the first official one in West Germany); failure to veto a Catholic Youth Association contact with the Polish Pax Movement, etc.

Der Tagesspiegel, a West Berlin newspaper, publicized the letter, then added that the letter had been "returned" by Rome. Confronted by the information, the Nunciature in Bonn said the letter was "no longer relevant." (Isn't the phrase, "no longer operative"?)

To be sure, Bishop Kempf is reportedly anxious to discuss the matter with the Congregation of Bishops in Rome.

Odds and Ends

—Cardinal O'Connell Seminary, a multi-million dollar complex in Boston's Jamaica Plain district, has been sold to the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. If that doesn't bring O'Connell back from the dead, it's time to question immortality.

—Quote of the Week Award to John Kenneth Galbraith, for his comment apropos a possible Nixon resignation: "Galbraith's Law states that anyone who says he won't resign four times, will."

—An indignant Penn-Central woman commuter accused the conductor the other morning of being "Public Enemy #2." Who's #1, asked the conductor? She shot back: "Nixon." JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Reverend Nudists

Warren, Pa.

To the Editors: I was thrilled with Charles Davis' article on the striptease [Nov. 2], particularly because it dealt at least peripherally with a subject very much in need of theological treatment: nudity.

It seems to me that we are imprisoned in our clothes. Those of us who have with great difficulty managed to escape from the intellectual and emotional bonds that help keep us clothed are nonetheless held fast by the bonds of law and custom, the former threatening us with jail and the latter with social ostracism. (I include here ecclesiastical ostracism since, because I am a nudist and was arrested for being nude, my attempts to continue my studies for the priesthood have been rebuffed by every U.S. diocese and some foreign ones.)

God didn't do this to us. We did it, and are doing it, to ourselves. I see it as another manifestation of our revolt against our good Creator, just another of our many insults to God—this one equivalent perhaps to blasphemy. For to condemn the created, in this case the human body, is to condemn the Creator. What an incredible insult, demanding the concealment of the greatest of His material masterpieces.

As usual, it's not God who suffers from this, but ourselves. And I suspect that, poor fools that we are, this is merely another prison from which we'll never escape in this life. We could be made free by the truth and divine grace, but we seem to want nothing to do with either.

RICHARD A. WALTERS

Novak's Nixonia

Hollis, N.Y.

To the Editors: Michael Novak's article, "Nixon's Gift to the Nation" [Sept. 21], may have been ironic but it wasn't very enlightening.

(Continued on page 247)

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COMMONWEAL *A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts.*
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.
Printed in the USA and published weekly,
except biweekly Christmas-New Year's and June to mid-September,
by Commonweal Publishing Co., 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016
MUrray Hill 3-2042. *Copyright © 1973 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.*
US and Canada: $14 a year. Foreign $16. Single copies 40¢

THE ENERGY CRISIS

For some time ecologists have been warning that the thinnest thread in the ecosystem web was mineral resources, and that what nature had taken eons to join together in the crust of the earth, industrial man was threatening to devastate in the relatively short space of several decades. The warnings were sometimes dismissed out of hand, and almost invariably discounted. But not any more. The condition ecologists have warned about is suddenly at hand—with respect to oil at least. The condition has been induced, to be sure, by politics, but it is now widely appreciated that politics is only the proximate cause for a situation that was inevitable. The political element, however, produces a crisis burdened by the factor of immediacy; overnight vast areas of the world, including the U.S., are face to face with problems that were supposedly off in the future somewhere. The lesson: add politics to ecology equations and out the window go possibilities for cushioned landings.

Statesmen and politicians were undoubtedly aware of the disruption to modern life and industry that a political decision to withhold oil could have in the developed world. Yet it is apparent from the frenzied energy-crisis activities of the past few weeks that policy-makers—in the U.S. most notably—did not take seriously the prospect that the Arabs would spurn dollars and slow down their oil flow. For surely there would then have been a contingency plan to be put immediately into action. The fact that there wasn't must rank as a classic example of economic and political short-sightedness.

Not surprisingly, as a consequence, the country is deluged with a rash of proposals, some of them as sensible as they are overdue (like controls at last on gasoline for automobile consumption), but others quite worrisome from both ecological and health points of view. The Alaska pipeline, for instance, is now a legislative reality, and although Alaska will never be the same for the decision, the pipeline was perhaps inevitable. But more ominous than that decision may be proposals to waive air-quality standards, lift controls on strip-mining of coal, and proliferate nuclear power plants (thus heightening odds on a nuclear accident, while at the same time raising radiation-intake levels with increased liability to cancer, leukemia, genetic disturbances and Lord knows what else). It could be a fatal swap

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if we bartered health and neighborhood environmental balances in order to continue to live a while longer in the questionable style to which we, as a nation, have become accustomed.

None of this is to say that the United States should be resigned to a given plight—only that the country should not be impulsive and rush into measures that it will live to regret. The energy crisis is a test of the nation's imagination and its wit, not an invitation to reckless plunges from which there may be no turning back. American ingenuity has already destroyed enough of the world's environment. It is a time now for stock-taking—and for an appreciation finally that the earth is a finite object that cannot be endlessly used and abused, as has been the American wont.

The crisis imposed on this country by the Arab world will, of course, have severe hurts. It will shrink the profits of many industries and, more importantly, cost many people their jobs and their businesses. If the past is any indication, it will be the small people—the marginally equipped—who will be hurt the more. On the other hand, the crisis could have its redeeming side if it imposes a modesty on our expectations as a people. We are a spoiled, profligate nation, and it will harm few of us to have to part with some of energized gadgets of affluence—our pleasure boats and campers and extra cars, our electric toothbrushes and no-stoop shoeshiners, our air conditioners. Prosperity has become something of a national nemesis. If the nation is forced to shape a less profane set of living values, one more atuned to nature's capacity to provide, it will be fitting.

In fact, we had better get about this task, for the world is only at the beginning of its natural resources problems. Copper, lead, zinc—in fact, all nonrenewable resources, with the possible exceptions of coal and lignite, are in short supply. Even the Arabian oil wells are not bottomless. Based on current consumption figures, these wells, vast as they are, would not sustain present growth rates beyond 1985-1990.

In the past, it was possible to meet impending shortages by exploiting some new corner of the globe through an ever expanding technology. But the globe has run out of "new corners," and technology itself has grown into a problem by its own demands on energy. At the same time, even the most promising of energy prospects are of limited hope, since as matters now stand gains will be balanced off by exploding consumptive requirements, particularly as the expectations of the underdeveloped world rise and are satisfied. In this context, the American crisis is the world's crisis. But since the U.S. is overwhelmingly the largest consumer of the world's resources (the average American in the next seven days will consume as much energy as most other people of the globe will consume in a year's time), the challenges spawned of the current crisis are uniquely American.

As these challenges are faced, there should be perspective among Americans over grievances with the Arabs for embargoing their oil. The Arab action is deplorable, but as newspaper ads placed by Kuwait in recent days should remind us, it is nothing above what the U.S. does itself—witness last June's soybean embargo. The embargoing of oil results in extensive hardship. But what of the best-fed nation in the world embargoing foodstuffs to protect supermarket prices? Our lot is again our just dessert.

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DUTCH ELECTIONS

LEFT TURN IN THE NETHERLANDS

In the years immediately following World War II, the Center-Left coalitions that ruled Holland concentrated on two tasks: rebuilding the country from the devastation wrought by the war and expanding the social welfare system. Their success was reflected in the prosperity of the 1960s and in the assumption of power by a series of conservative-oriented governments whose main goal was to preserve the status quo. Even the Provos, the Dutch "New Left" radicals who captured the public imagination, failed to have much of an impact on national politics.

But recently, politics in The Hague has begun to catch up with the changes that have radically altered Dutch society since the war. In last year's election, the religious parties lost ground while the Labor Party and its socialist allies gained. Following the election, a record-breaking 164 days went by without a government because each major party was unwilling to join a coalition unless it could be assured of a dominant voice—a sharp departure from the compromise politics of the past. The new government that finally took office last Spring was headed by the first Labor Prime Minister in 15 years, and its policy pronouncements indicate a leftward shift that could have long-range effects on Western Europe as well as on Holland itself.

In focusing on economic recovery after the war, Holland achieved one of the highest economic growth-rates in Europe. This was accomplished, in part, by a labor relations system under which new contracts were decided by three-member committees including representatives of the government, the union and management. Strikes were almost unheard of and wages remained

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among the lowest in the West.

In the last few years, the economic picture has become less rosy. Rising inflation led Dutch unions to become much more militant and to use the strike weapon more often. Unemployment has risen, especially in the depressed areas of the southeast and the former mining center of South Limburg. The general economic slowdown has clearly been a major factor in the rise in support for the socialist parties.

Nevertheless, it is not economic problems that worry the Dutch the most: poverty has virtually been wiped out and there is an extensive system of social welfare benefits to be relied upon in times of trouble. A recent poll of Dutch people between the ages of 15 and 49, which was published in the respected magazine, *Planning and Development in the Netherlands,* revealed a widespread belief that material standards of living would continue to go up. What concerned respondents more were the side effects of growth, such as pollution; there was fear that population growth will put pressure on Holland's sharply limited land resources and make the housing shortage worse.

The survey revealed a strong desire for redistribution of wealth and a reduction of class differences, combined with pessimism that this would occur. Huge majorities, according to the survey, felt that the "economic life of the country is dominated by a handful of very large firms" and that "the man in the street is without any real influence in shaping the decisions of government through the traditional channels of party politics."

The survey concluded with a prediction that, "For a people which attaches considerable importance to democratic values, the widespread sense of impotency will hardly be accepted with equanimity." Recent developments add weight to this forecast. The new militancy of the unions often includes demands for a voice in industrial decisions. Several thousand "action groups" have sprung up throughout the country to demand that government and private industry take steps to deal with planning, environmental, transportation and other problems. These groups have urged that government be decentralized as a means of expanding *inspraak,* or community participation, and giving ordinary people a say in the decisions that affect their lives. While there have been some notable successes, locally and at the national level—Parliament, for example, has passed strict anti-pollution laws—the response has hardly been overwhelming.

A good part of the reason for this lies with the political parties. The 14 parties represented in Parliament still mirror the traditional segmentation of Dutch society along religious and non-religious lines, despite the fact that secularization, ecumenism and other post-war trends have blurred these divisions, especially in the larger cities. Parliament contains four main blocs: the Catholic People's Party, several Protestant parties, the socialists and a handful of "general" parties, such as the economically-conservative Liberals. Even though a more aware, sophisticated and issue-oriented electorate has emerged, the parties have still competed on the basis of traditional loyalties.

The November, 1972 election was somewhat different. Labor, the largest party, united with two smaller parties and announced a unity program emphasizing defense cutbacks, the environment and participatory democracy; in the balloting, Labor itself gained four seats over its previous total and the socialist coalition won a total of 56 seats in the 150-member Parliament. The right-leaning Liberals, who offered a coherent fiscal program, jumped from 16 to 22 seats. But the moderate Catholic People's Party, the second largest group, was divided, as in the past, and unable to take a joint position with its Protestant allies; it lost 20 percent of its seats and the religious coalition fell from 58 to 48 seats. The voters, especially the 750,000 new voters under the age of 21, showed a clear tendency to vote for those parties on both the left and the right who offered specific programs.

In the jockeying that followed the election, Labor insisted on guarantees that it would be able to implement its platform before it would agree to join a coalition. Eventually, Labor formed a five-party coalition last May with Catholic People's, a Protestant party and its two socialist partners. While the socialists will not be able to carry out all their platform plans, they are likely to have a good deal more leeway than in the past.

Domestically, Prime Minister Joop Den Uyl has pledged to introduce a rent maximum, capital gains taxes and higher death duties, expand support for public transit and exert stricter controls over Holland's natural resources. In foreign policy, the government vowed to increase aid for development programs carried out by freedom fighters in southern Africa in areas under their control. Most important, perhaps, the government has promised to make drastic cuts in the defense budget next year, a move that would free millions of dollars for social programs. There is strong support among the socialist and Catholic People's parties for loosening Dutch ties to NATO and developing a foreign policy much more independent of the United States.

More than any country outside of Scandinavia, the Dutch public is aware of the problems of "post-industrial" society. Last year's election seems to have forced the parties to realize the extent of the voters' dissatisfaction with politicians who put off dealing with these problems as long as possible. The current Center-Left government is hardly radical, but it appears at least to be taking its cue from the people and starting to think creatively about new solutions to the country's needs.

PETER FREIBERG

(*Peter Freiberg, a staff writer on the* New York Post, *recently returned from a trip to Holland.*)

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MANAGING A TIGHTENED WORLD

PETER STEINFELS

For Americans like myself, to whom the Depression is a tale our parents told us and the rationing stamps of World War II merely the residue of a memory, the current economic troubles are startling. We had no illusions of a perfect prosperity. We knew about high unemployment rates and gnawing inflation and periodic recessions which were always deeper and harder to climb out of than our public figures would admit. These were deficiencies which struck at those on the periphery of the economy—the old, the unskilled, the minorities, those in marginal industries or undeveloped regions. They were the victims of the economic humanity we traded off for economic efficiency.

But shortages of food? Shortages of gasoline and heating oil and basic industrial energy? Economic efficiency, did I say? One has the sense that the system is not only cruelly ragged at the edges but come undone at the very center.

Our first reaction in the face of such a surprising development is to explain it in terms of temporary and accidental conditions. The Russians had a crop failure; the Mid-East war produced an oil boycott. Such explanations are obviously part of the story.

Also part of the story, however, are long-term, more permanent factors. For some years we have lived with the clichés about the world getting smaller: so much less time to travel from London to Tokyo, so few minutes for a missile to speed from Montana to Moscow. That was just the dramatic surface of a changing reality which now is not only directly pertinent to international executives and military strategists but to grocery shoppers, gas station attendants, and anyone in need of winter heat. The world is not only grown smaller but tighter.

The problem is not only population but, more important, affluence. Rising standards of living in Europe, Russia, and Japan mean more people who want to eat more meat, heat more homes at higher and steadier temperatures, drive more vacation miles in more cars, buy more energy-consuming appliances from more energy-consuming factories.

Does all this prove the dire predictions of some of the ecologists, that we are on the brink of catastrophe? Not necessarily. But a tightened world is obviously a world requiring careful, coordinated management.

Which raises the fundamental question: Is this management going to be from the top down, or from the bottom up? Is it going to be democratic, or is it going to be the work of "experts" who, at most, submit to a plebiscite on their performance every four years or so? In other words, the President's approach to the energy crisis may be a more important indicator of what the future holds than his approach to the Watergate crisis.

The two are not unconnected, however. The leaders of both the U.S. and USSR have recognized the nature of the "tightened world," which now involves wheat deals as well as hot lines. On the international level, this perception has propelled them toward détente. On the domestic level, it has made them fearful of the volatility of their own peoples and determined to keep things in hand. As a result, Moscow has its dissident intellectuals; Washington its Watergate. (I would not push the parallel too far: no Watergate conspirator ever was tempted by the kind of power available to the Kremlin leaders, nor do the Soviets encounter any obstacles to their machinations such as the Nixonites found in the press, the courts, and Congress.)

If a "tightened world" is run from the top down rather than the bottom up, then it will be run for the benefit of the top and not the bottom. Nixon's "volunteerism," for example, promises only to make a sucker of the good citizen, while his proposed hike in gasoline prices promises to hurt the poor man more than the wealthy. Meanwhile, oil company earnings soar; everyone gets to sacrifice except those with the biggest share in creating the problem.

There is no simple solution for the energy crisis. There is no simple solution for the difficulties of a "tightened world." Whatever solutions can be devised will have to be long-term and comprehensive. But if they are not to reflect primarily the views and needs of the most powerful—who will surely seize the opportunity to rationalize greater control over basic decisions—then a kind of democratic revival is necessary. The AFL-CIO has dramatically plunged into a grass-roots campaign for impeachment; perhaps it should also conduct grass-roots forums on the energy crisis. Perhaps Congressmen should organize local hearings the way some did during the Vietnam war.

The alternative to a democratic management of a "tightened world" is suggested by former G.O.P. speechwriter William Safire's report that Henry Kissinger has recommended President Nixon read Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West*. Talcott Parsons once summed up the line of thought expressed by Spengler: that the age of "individualism, humanitarianism, intellectual freedom, skepticism" was being replaced by an age of "restrictions on individual freedom . . . , a revival of faith . . . and an increase in the use of force."

Is that why the President is feeling so chipper?

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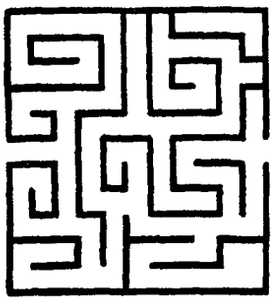
ABORTION: AN ECUMENICAL DILEMMA

GREGORY BAUM



'Many Protestant theologians whose moral judgment I respect look upon abortion under certain circumstances as a moral choice'

Because of the delicate nature of the topic, I wish to begin this article with a personal remark. Emotionally I am strongly opposed to abortions. When I argue about the issue in my mind, I tend to conjure up selfish and insensitive opponents who are exclusively interested in their comfort and career. I tend to connect the trend toward abortions with the hostility to little children that characterizes our highly rational culture. In my mind the demand for abortions becomes a symptom of an ultimate capitalism where people claim total control not only over their property but over their bodies, a kind of *reductio ad absurdum* of the individualism that our economic system has generated. What has been lost, I then feel, is a sense of wonder before life itself and the hidden forces operative within it.

I

It is only when I engage in more serious reflection that I remember that among the people who regard abortion under certain circumstances as a licit, moral, even if regrettable and extreme form of birth control, are Christian thinkers and in fact several Christian churches. Many Protestant theologians whose work I admire and whose moral judgment I respect look upon abortion under certain circumstances as a moral choice. In some cases, according to them, it could even be a duty. I have read these theological essays and studied the ecclesiastical documents: and while I always win the argument when I discuss the issue in my mind with the imaginary opponents, selfish and insensitive as they are, I must admit that I respect the reflections of Protestant thinkers and take the teaching of their churches seriously.

As an ecumenical theologian I must ask myself whether one should regard the moral teaching of these Christian churches, even though they differ from the traditional position, as a Christian witness. There is, of course, the possibility that churches betray the substance of the gospel. We recall the blindness of the so-called German Christians under the Hitler regime. Yet at that time, the new ecclesiastical trend was repudiated by other Christian churches outside the country and by courageous Christians in Germany. No one received the position of the German Christians as an authentic witness to gospel morality. Their nationalistic stand was a brief episode in the life of the church, which should never be forgotten, but there is no analogy here whatever to the position on abortion adopted by many Christian churches in the industrialized world. Here Christian thinkers, on grounds they regard as responsible, tested, and in keeping with the gospel, come to conclusions on abortion that differ from traditional teaching but are shared by great numbers of Christians in the highly developed countries, whose moral judgments on other issues, even if untraditional, deserve the greatest respect. This break with the moral tradition of the past, then, does not resemble the kind of betrayal mentioned above: it recalls, rather, the break with the tradition that has taken place on many moral issues in recent decades. Even when we disagree with the view on abortion, defended by many Protestant thinkers, we must respect it as part of the Christian conversation about the meaning of the gospel for modern life.

Vatican Council II has acknowledged this ecumenical dilemma. In the Decree on Ecumenism, in the section

FATHER GREGORY BAUM, O.S.A., *is the well-known theologian and author. His latest book is* Faith and Doctrine.

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dealing with the attitude of Catholics to Protestant Christians, we read, "If in moral matters there are many (Protestant) Christians who do not always understand the gospel in the same way as Catholics, and do not admit the same solutions for the more difficult problems of modern society, nevertheless they share our desire to cling to Christ's words as the source of Christian virtue." (No. 23.) When Catholics disagree with the teaching on abortion adopted by some Protestant churches and many Christian thinkers, they should respect this Protestant position as an attempt to deal in a Christian way with a difficult moral problem.

This respect, I propose, is all the more necessary because the Anglican and Protestant churches have exercised moral leadership in contemporary society on many issues, on which the Catholic church still defended the moral stance of a previous age. We all remember the repeated papal condemnations of religious liberty which, as late as the fifties of this century, caused a good deal of trouble to the late John Courtney Murray. Similarly in regard to birth control, I hold that the Anglican and Protestant churches gave moral leadership in the conditions of modern life with all its ambiguities, at a time when the Catholic church continued to teach moral norms from the cultural experience of the pre-modern age. From my own personal contact with Protestant moral thinkers, I have acquired great admiration for them and thus I do not find the words of Vatican II exaggerated when they recall that Protestant thinkers look to Christ as the source of moral wisdom.

I realize, of course, that Protestant thinkers are divided on the abortion issue. My point is that we must respect their various positions as part of the significant Christian conversation. It is my personal experience that the Protestant authors who repudiate abortion altogether and agree with the common Catholic position often entertain moral views on other issues, such as authority, obedience, war, private property, socialism, etc., which greatly differ from my own. I suppose it is inevitable that we test the strength of a moral argument offered by a thinker by turning to the moral conclusions to which his reflections have led him on other issues. This may not be philosophically sound, but in the concrete conditions of life we do rely on the moral counsel of persons whose moral judgment we approve in many areas.

The first conclusion I draw from the above reflections is that one cannot approve of the language and the arguments adopted by Catholics in their defense of the traditional position, which imply that the defenders of abortion are immoral, selfish, insensitive, cruel, lacking in respect for life, or worse. Yet such language is found even in statements made by bishops and popes. While I am quite sure that there are unprincipled people arguing in favor of abortion, people who have lost a sense of morality and look upon life in a materialist, comfort-oriented way, it would be quite unjust, and therefore immoral, for Catholics to suppose that all people who favor abortion under certain circumstances, including Christian groups and thinkers, share this materialistic outlook on life. The dilemma is that there are Christians who think that a liberal position on abortion is more moral, more in keeping with God's will, than the traditional one.

Since no one claims that the traditional position is revealed by God, Catholics should not adopt a tone of voice as if their position is beyond challenge. Catholics may hold that, from their point of view, a liberal position on abortion is immoral, possibly due to false consciousness induced by the social conditions of industrial society, but they have no right whatever to suggest that the thinkers who differ from them are immoral, that their position reflects a lack of virtue and that the theologians and the theologically-oriented among them have refused to search the gospel to find God's will in regard to this contemporary problem.

The ecumenical ecclesiology, found in the Decree on Ecumenism, which has been commonly adopted by Catholic theologians in North America, demands that we regard the abortion issue as a complex one. While Catholics may repudiate certain extreme positions on abortion with vehemence and passion, I do not see how they can do this to the more nuanced and careful positions of Christian thinkers and their churches. The idea that Catholics can solve the moral and pastoral problems of the present age simply by themselves, without relying on ecumenical dialogue and cooperation and without hoping that wisdom and insight will be exchanged among various Christian communities, living as they do in such varied circumstances, seems to me contrary to the ecclesial foundation of the Christian faith. The first conclusion of this article, then, is that Catholics should not employ language and arguments against abortion that do not recognize the ecumenical dimension of the problem.

II

How is it possible that Christians who take the gospel seriously come to such different conclusions? This, I think, demands an explanation. For it would not do to say that Catholics on the whole are wiser, and more moral, than Anglicans and Protestants. Nor has anyone suggested that we are dealing with a revealed truth which Catholics and some Protestants have preserved, but which the major Protestant churches have abandoned. The reason why the position of the Catholic church differs from that of many other churches is related to a difference in social and cultural background. While a theologian does not wish to reduce significant moral stands to diverse social conditions, he must recognize

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that the conditions of modern life have produced a changed outlook on traditional issues such as birth control, extramarital sex, divorce, etc. in the Anglican and Protestant churches and that these same conditions are leading Catholic theologians in the highly industrialized parts of the world, encouraged by the present pluralism in the Catholic church, to raise the same issues and come to very similar conclusions. Abortion, however, is such a serious matter that every reflection on it is pushed to its very foundation.

To understand the difference between the traditional position, defended by the Catholic church, and the position adopted by some Protestant churches, we must

place the respective moral judgments into the wider vision of human life, to which they belong and from which they try to derive their validity. Individual moral norms never stand alone: they belong to a more total understanding of human life, to a more complete ideal of what human existence is about. Thanks to my conversations with the Protestant theologian, Herbert Richardson, my colleague at St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto, I have begun to understand more clearly the two diverse world views, traditional and new, in which the abortion question has been raised.

The traditional Catholic position, with roots in the ancient past, was dominated by the concept of nature. Here sexuality and procreation were understood as being part of nature, watched over by divine providence. I wish to call this, Model A. According to Model A, sexuality is a biological function directed towards the procreation of the human race. While there is pleasure attached to sexuality, it is oriented by its very nature to the begetting of children. Sexual intercourse outside of marriage is therefore sinful. The conception of children is part of the natural process, watched over by God's providence. It is not for parents to choose the number of children. To practice birth control or to provoke an abortion is an interference with the order of nature and hence gravely sinful. From this perspective, abortion is seen among the sins against nature, touching upon the procreative process of human life.

Since in recent years the Catholic arguments against non-procreative sexual expressions have become less convincing, especially since the traditional position on birth control is no longer accepted, it has been necessary to find new and stronger arguments against abortion. The arguments now given see it as a destruction of fetal life destined to become fully human or, according to some thinkers, even the destruction of human life simply speaking. What was condemned and abhorred in the past as a sin against the order of nature is today often described as the taking of innocent life or murder. Yet the Catholic tradition shows that it is possible to oppose abortion and regard it as a grave moral evil, without solving the question of when fetal life in the mother's womb should properly be called a human person. There is no official teaching on this matter: and it is unlikely that this is a matter on which the Christian church is able to offer definitive teaching.

The more liberal position on abortion, adopted by some Protestant Churches, fits into a world picture that is dominated by the concept of history. I shall call this, Model B. People do not enter into their destiny by conforming to a given order of nature, but by assuming responsibility for themselves and their environment and creating their own future. God's providence is here not a guidance from above, but a gracious action within human life, freeing and enabling people ever to expand the area of their responsibility. Sexuality, conception and procreation, while grounded in biology, belong properly to the sphere of history. Man is called upon by God to assume responsibility for them. Sexuality is here seen not just under its biological aspect: it is a wider human reality, with deep meaning and power, and men and women are summoned to integrate the sexual dimension into their lives in a healing, joyful and reconciling manner. The biological orientation of sexuality toward procreation cannot be used as an argument against extra-marital sexuality. Moralists here do not speak of "the pleasure" that accompanies sexuality but of the multi-leveled meaning and power it has in bringing about responsible human growth and community. Here the number of children is the responsibility of the parents. God's providence is believed to be operative through the grace-sustained free choice of mother and father. This world view, as I said, I shall regard as Model B.

According to Model B, abortion is an extreme interference into the life process, prompted by people's responsibility for the future, which to many thinkers seems justified, at least under certain circumstances. They think that the parents' responsibility includes the authority, in cases of emergency, to interrupt a pregnancy with a clinical intervention. We note, however, that the moral approval of abortion is by no means a necessary consequence of Model B. It is possible to adopt Model B for the understanding of sexual life and procreation, without acknowledging abortion as a moral option. Nonetheless, it is the world view of man's ever increasing responsibility for the future, for the number

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of children born and for the kind of life these children will have, that explains how theologians and Christian churches can come to acknowledge abortion as a moral choice in extreme cases.

The distinction between the two models enables me to make a significant point. I hold that the Catholic church at Vatican II has shifted from Model A to Model B. This was done, not in a fully consistent manner in regard to all its consequences, but in regard to two significant issues. First, ecclesiastical teaching at Vatican II abandoned the view that children are the primary end of marriage: quite apart from its procreative role, sexuality is credited with an important function in the building up of the family in love. Secondly, Vatican II unambiguously adopted the ideal of responsible parenthood: divine providence can no longer be invoked as dispensing people from assuming responsibility for their procreative role. Since then, and despite the papal teaching reproving contraception, Catholic theologians have on the whole opted for Model B and developed its full implications for a new theological approach to sexuality.

This leads me to the second conclusion of this article. The opposition of Catholics against abortion should place itself frankly on the side of man's historical responsibility for his sexual life. Catholics should argue against abortion out of the presuppositions of Model B. I am uneasy with a movement against abortion that does not advocate sexual education and birth control. The attempt of Catholics to use their opposition to abortion as a subtle way of returning to Model A, that is of going back to a purely biological-procreative view of sexuality and to the traditional sexual morality corresponding to this, I regard as theologically indefensible. It is my view that since Catholics are against abortion and want to help to reduce the number of abortions, they should favor the spread of sexual information, the availability of birth control and an enlightened attitude which increases people's sense of responsibility for their own sexual lives.

Catholic groups and ecclesiastical leaders fighting against abortion often adopt a language and a style of argument that promote the view that sexuality is primarily and essentially procreative. In addition to opposing abortions, they advocate the traditional view of sexuality. Their struggle against abortion thus pursues two ends. While they do not always admit it, they wish to achieve two distinct goals with their campaign. But by linking their opposition of abortion to a highly biological view of sexuality, they weaken their arguments. We occasionally meet people involved in a movement against abortion with a certain passion, adopting a certain style and tone of voice, that give the impression that their main concern is not really human life (they were not greatly upset about the deaths during the war) but sexual morality. They are greatly upset by a sexual morality that acknowledges man's quest for sexual freedom within the bounds of reason and love. By linking a special view of sexuality to their struggle against abortions, their arguments actually lose credibility.

Let me add that the argument of some groups that wherever more sexual information and ready access to contraception are available the result has always been more abortions rather than less, is not the point. What is involved, I think, is a matter of principle. Since I hold that the Catholic church has moved over to Model B and since I am convinced that the older view of sexuality, however adequate it may have been for the culture that generated it, is harmful for the present day, it is for me a matter of principle to defend the right and duty of men and women to choose with responsibility the form and pattern of their sexual lives. In this sense we must hope that more adequate, more human and more reliable methods of contraception will be invented. Society must overcome the violence of abortions by increasing the sense of power and responsibility people have over their sexual lives.

III

Moral theology usually puts the burden of freedom and guilt on the individual person. From the study of sociology, however, it would appear that the social and cultural conditions in which people live create a certain mind-set that must also be taken in consideration when evaluating people's actions. These two aspects are dialectically related: there is an interaction between the consciousness induced by social institutions and the freedom to transcend their limitations. The church's preaching on the whole has paid attention mainly to the aspect of personal freedom, thus sparing the institutions from a critical analysis and exempting them from moral guilt. While moral theologians usually acknowledge that institutional pressures reduce personal freedom and limit culpability, they do not sufficiently appreciate the formative influence of institutions on human consciousness.

Moralists in church and society tend to lament people's selfishness, their lack of generosity, and their bad will without analyzing to what extent the crimes committed by them are related to the mind-set induced by the contradictions within society. Can we confine an analysis of why people steal to a consideration of their private lives? Or must we not also analyze the society that produces an impoverished proletariat, bombards these same people with advertisements for the easy life, and creates conditions of loneliness and personal alienation in which drug addiction thrives? If we only take a firm stand against robbery without submitting society to a critical analysis, we disguise the true causes of evil in society, defend the injustices implicit in the present social system, and perpetuate the individualistic illusion

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which is related to the very problem. The moralistic preaching of church and society is here seen as a defense of the established order.

After the October 1970 crisis in French Canada, the kidnapping of two government officials, and the accidental murder of one of them, Mr. Laporte, the French Canadian bishops published a statement expressing their dismay at the outbreak of violence in their midst. Let us remember, they wrote, that violence is nourished by injustice.

If the root of evil is twofold, in personal consciousness and in the social institutions made by men, then we must learn to repudiate abortions in this dialectical manner. We cannot place all the blame on the trapped people who desperately seek a way out of their predicament. If it is true that violence is nourished by injustice, then we must ask what are the social injustices that make people interfere with the life-giving process in a violent manner. The repudiation of abortion should then be accompanied by a critique of society that tries to define the contradictions operative within it that foster the violence of abortion. Few moralists have done this.

Even a cursory analysis reveals two kinds of oppression in society favoring abortion. First and foremost, it seems to me, is the alienation imposed on people, especially, though not exclusively, on the underprivileged, by the money- and profit-oriented, maximizing economic system. The present system, through its various institutions, tries to make people into customers. From childhood on people are taught to dream of buying goods and symbolizing affluence through ostentatious consumption. As they become part of the world of consumers, be it only in their dreams, they become estranged from the deep things of life, from love, truth and fidelity. Institutionally summoned to a false life, they fall into emotional and sexual chaos. The confusion, isolation and terror created among the urban dispossessed, coupled with an authentic desire for ecstasy, traps vast numbers of women in unwanted pregnancies. And while they are quite incapable of looking after themselves, society expects them to look after their children.

A second contradiction, operative in another section of the population, is the oppression of women. In our generation women have discovered that much of the emphasis that they are mothers, and achieve their highest fulfillment as mothers looking after a family, is an ideology that prevents them from experiencing the self-realization that is open to men. They sense that what is involved in much of the opposition to abortion is the hidden trend of the male-dominated society, endorsed by many women, to keep the power relations between men and women as they are. The women struggling for their liberation regard any form of unwanted motherhood as an unjust imposition of society.

It is the task of the moral theologian—this is the third conclusion of this article—to institute a detailed critique of society in order to see more precisely how violence is nourished by injustice. The secular liberal approach to abortion, represented by the recent decision of the U.S. Supreme Court, which regards the interruption of pregnancies as a purely private matter, refuses to recognize in the abortive practices a symptom of social ills and alienation. The secular liberal approach intends to persuade us that nothing is basically wrong with society. The moralist who puts the blame for abortion simply on the people who seek it, or commit it, and who refuses to deal critically with the social system, also disguises the full cause of evil in society. What the moral theologian will have to find, through a more detailed analysis of society, is a set of arguments repudiating abortions, that do not strengthen the oppressions working in the social order but promote social change and the liberation of men and women. Only too often is the call for a return to virtue an attempt to make people look away from the discrepancies in the institutions and thus a disguise for a reactionary political outlook. The opposition to abortion could thus go hand in hand with the continued oppression of women and with the approval of an individualistic, profit-oriented, money-centered, customer-producing society. Catholic theologians will want to make their rejection of violence as a licit means of birth control, a statement that is politically and culturally responsible and raises the consciousness of the community in regard to the contradictions operative in it.

SR. ELLEN MURPHY

POEM OF WINDLESS SNOW FOR MEL, THE GARDENER

Three windless days and nights of falling flakes
cast snow bells over the mountain-ash berries,
lily-cups over the red-orange clusters.

This is poetry that a fathomless sky makes
for the eye alone. Earthly vocabularies
are not true and light enough to ring so lustrous

a tone. As in a child's good dream
the imperfect world lies healed of its imperfection.
Its leafless trees bear boughs of crystal light.

Its luminous green flows white where the evergreen
cascades serenely in the bright direction
of slopes and paths that illumine even the night.

In shimmering unity this world of wounds
becomes a new-born world under bells that glow
and children fall without hurt in a dream of snow.

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ENCORE IN CHICAGO

DENNIS D. FISHER

For the Chicago Seven, four years made a lot a difference

The Chicago Seven and their two defense lawyers were back in U.S. District Court to answer charges of contempt but it wasn't the same. Four years made a lot of difference. Gone was the original trial judge, Julius J. Hoffman, now 78; gone, too, were the original prosecutors and the original charges of conspiracy and crossing state lines to incite to riot during the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

When the first trial before Judge Hoffman ended and the jury retired to deliberate, the judge leveled more than 150 contempt citations at the seven defendants and their lawyers for the occasionally tumultuous behavior during the 4½-month case. The judge imposed prison sentences, ranging to more than four years for attorney William M. Kunstler. Before the jury returned and acquitted all defendants on the conspiracy charge, the judge ordered six of them locked up. David Dellinger was already in jail, after Judge Hoffman revoked his bond following the well-known "bull-shit" outburst. However, Dellinger, Rennie Davis, Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman and Tom Hayden were found guilty on the rioting charge. John Froines and Lee Weiner were acquitted on the rioting charge but did not escape Judge Hoffman's net of contempt. Kunstler and his co-counsel, Leonard I. Weinglass, also were cited for contempt. But they remained free on bond to prepare the appeal and to seek bond for their seven clients, who spent 14 days in jail on the contempt charges.

Eventually the U.S. Court of Appeals in Chicago set aside the convictions on the rioting charge, upholding the validity of the law, but ordering a new trial. The appeals panel said the evidence in the first trial was sufficient to support the conviction but that the trial judge committed errors in jury selection among others. The U.S. Court of Appeals was highly critical of Judge Hoffman's conduct during the 1969-70 trial. The panel also flayed the original prosecutors, former U.S. Attorney Thomas A. Foran, a political ally of Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley, and Foran's assistant and now law partner Richard G. Schultz. The same appeals court also reversed the contempt specifications, ordering a new trial before a different judge, who could preside dispassionately.

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But the times have shifted the nation's focus somewhat; the Vietnam and Cambodian conflicts, while festering, are not the center of consciousness that they were during the original trial. That forum produced accusations of corruption at the highest levels of the Nixon Administration, which presaged the Watergate troubles and the clamor for the President's resignation. At the time, the trial was labeled a political action by the Nixon Administration's Justice Department "to get" the Chicago Seven and eradicate their alternate lifestyle.

In deciding on the issue of retrial of the rioting case, the passage of time played no little part in U.S. Attorney James R. Thompson's and the Justice Department's decision to drop the matter. But the prosecutors decided to bring the contempt case back into court, ostensibly to vindicate the judiciary. The 150 specifications of contempt were pared to 52 and U.S. Chief Justice Warren E. Burger designated U.S. District Court Judge Edward T. Gignoux, of Portland, Me., to preside at the contempt trial. Thompson assigned two assistant U.S. attorneys, Royal B. Martin, 28, and Gary L. Starkman, 27, to the case. The prosecution would be low key. Thompson delivered the opening statement for the government, saying that it was not the prosecution's intention "to open old wounds on the body politic." Martin and Starkman presented the government's evidence in less than 20 minutes as the trial got underway on schedule October 30. The government piled the volumes containing more than 23,000 pages of transcript from the first trial onto a table near the judge. They rested their case after five official court stenographers, who wrote the transcript, attested to its authenticity.

Then the defense began its attack and some of the sparks and flavor of the original trial could be felt and tasted. Morton Stavis, chief defense attorney, and Kunstler, Weinglass and Dellinger, acting as his own lawyer, argued for judgments of acquittal on all the charges. They contended that the prosecution was "invidiously discriminatory" since Judge Hoffman and the prosecutors faced no punishment for their outrageous misbehavior. It was also argued by the defense that the actions cited for prosecution failed to meet standards set out by the appeals court for contempt. These included intent to obstruct the trial with an "actual and material obstruction" resulting.

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The arguments were delivered in a calm atmosphere and courtesy was the watchword of everyone involved. By contrast to Judge Hoffman, Gignoux remained at ease and unflappable in the face of extended arguments and some unorthodox activity in the courtroom as, for example, when america, 2-year-old son of defendant Abbie Hoffman, crawled on the courtroom floor and squirted his father with milk from his bottle. The involvement of the others in the anti-war movement of the late 1960s was the common thread that bound them together. Some, like Dellinger, Hayden and Froines, are now involved in the Indochina Peace Campaign. Davis is now a disciple of a young religious leader from India. He spent a good deal of time in court reading religious material and sitting cross legged in his chair at the defense table, eyes closed, meditating.

At the close of the arguments and before the defense case began, Judge Gignoux reduced by half the number of contempt citations against all defendants. The judge agreed to limit the maximum punishment for any defendant to six months in prison, but it seems clear from his actions and words that he believes six months to be unreasonable. He dismissed all citations against Froines and Weiner, acquitting them. But the trial proceeded

with Dellinger, Davis, Rubin, Hayden, Hoffman, Kunstler and Weinglass, facing a total of 26 specific instances of alleged misconduct.

In brief, the charges against the non-lawyer defendants break down into groups of perceived insults by Judge Hoffman; delays in the trial; protests after Bobby G. Seale, Black Panther Party leader and an original defendant in the riot case, was bound and gagged; Dellinger's famous barnyard expletive and the revocation of his bail, and the wearing of "judges robes" by Rubin and Hoffman. As for the lawyers, the charges generally involve arguing with Judge Hoffman after he ordered them to stop; "fanning the flames of disorder," in the words of the appeals court, and gratuitous, insulting comments as perceived by the judge.

The defense began its case by calling Seale, now chairman of the Panthers, and his attorney, Charles R. Garry, of San Francisco, as the first witnesses. Seale testified under questioning by Garry that he had no intention of disrupting the first trial. Garry, who was to have been chief defense counsel in the first trial but who was prevented from taking an active part because of gall-bladder surgery, described Judge Hoffman's obduracy and mistreatment of all lawyers in the case during the pretrial stages. Then he led Seale through a summary of Seale's continuing insistence before Judge Hoffman that he be allowed to act as his own lawyer in Garry's absence.

Seale admitted calling Judge Hoffman a "racist pig" and other insulting epithets. He said he arrived at the view that the judge was a racist when the judge questioned a prospective black woman juror. Hoffman learned that the woman had worked for prosecutor Foran and asked "in the domestic service?" Further questioning disclosed that she had been a legal secretary for Foran. Seale said Garry advised him by long distance telephone that Seale should persist in his demand to represent himself despite any consequences. So Judge Hoffman, acting in accord with the law at the time (since modified) that a defendant couldn't be excluded from his own trial, ordered Seale bound and gagged. But Seale's protests continued and evoked reactions from the other defendants such as symbolic protests by their failing to rise when the judge entered or left the courtroom. (Judge Gignoux found contempt charges involving failure to rise non-obstructionist of the trial and dismissed them.) The lawyers, Kunstler and Weinglass, were moved to comment on the spectacle of Seale as well. Kunstler at one point pleaded with the judge to stop what the lawyer characterized as "a medieval torture chamber."

Seale was one of the original eight defendants in the rioting case, but was severed from the case by Judge Hoffman after about six weeks of trial and the binding and gagging incidents. The judge declared a mistrial as to Seale and then sentenced him to a total of four years in prison for contempt of court. The U.S. Court of Appeals reversed the contempt charges and told the government it had to disclose some wiretap evidence it had against Seale. The prosecution decided against disclosure and dropped all charges against Seale.

Among the other defense witnesses called in the new trial—including the defendants, who described the background circumstances surrounding their alleged misbehavior—was former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark. Clark testified that he made it clear to his subordinates, including U.S. Attorney Foran in Chicago, that there wasn't enough evidence to support an indictment against Dellinger and the others under the anti-riot law, which he felt was invalid anyway.

In many ways the contempt trial presented an unusual mixture of *déjà vu* with only a few glimpses of the original furor of the Chicago Seven Conspiracy Trial. Somehow it all seemed both anti-climactic and unnecessary.

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THE SCREEN

Last week in this column I was judging Claude Chabrol's films in the light of Attic tragedy. I was discussing how Chabrol's imagination adapts moral dilemmas characteristic of the very greatest ancient drama to the more ambivalent, diminished stature of the modern protagonist. Now let me bring the discussion back down to earth with a thump. For the fact is that Chabrol's mentors are not Aeschylus and Sophocles, but Alfred Hitchcock and Howard Hawks. It is not in the sacred hillside theaters of Greece that Chabrol's work has its roots, but in rather seedy Parisian movie houses. Before he began making films, Chabrol was, along with all the other New-Wave directors, one of the *Cahiers de Cinéma* critics who were known as the "Hitchcock-o-Hawks-ians."

This background shows through Chabrol's films too. He has inherited Hitchcock's fondness of grotesque images, for example. Think of the picnic scene in *Le Boucher*, where blood from a corpse drips onto a slice of bread being eaten by a child. Later Chabrol even gave this image a very Hitchcockesque development when, at another crucial moment, red paint drips onto a rug in a manner at once both reminiscent and foreboding. Yet whatever techniques and instincts Chabrol may have picked up from Hitchcock, Chabrol's use of them exceeds Hitchcock's own. Chabrol's vision is larger than Hitchcock's. It contains Hitchcock's work, but isn't limited by it.

This is especially apparent in *This Man Must Die*, which both begins and ends with the sort of touches from which Hitchcock might have made the entire movie. After the film's central character has had his son killed by a hit-and-run driver, he advances several theories to the police. One is that the culprit has managed to conceal his damaged car because he owns a commercial garage. This theory turns out to be true, in fact. Chabrol's hero acts on it and tracks down the criminal himself. But this is still only a very limited kind of truth; and it does not ultimately have nearly as much import as the relationship the hero develops with the mistress and the son of the man he is stalking. In the end these human relationships outweigh in the actions of the characters any mystery-story truth. This is something that never happens in a Hitchcock movie.

(In Hitchcock movies legal boundaries and emotional boundaries tend to be the same—a tendency typified by *Suspicion*, where a wife's ability to love her husband depends solely on whether there is real criminal intent in his highly suspicious actions. This is an intriguing but simplistic view of human experience. Since Cary Grant's career as a leading man had to be protected, the film ends, contrary to Hitchcock's wishes, with the husband's exoneration. Really, though, it never makes that much difference which way it ends: nothing is inevitable here. The Greek view that people may love in spite of their guilt, rather than because of their innocence, is a much, much richer one.)

At the end of *This Man Must Die* the police discover a journal incriminating Chabrol's hero. When accused, however, he objects that he wouldn't have committed the murder knowing that the journal would be found. The police counter that he might have planted the journal precisely for the purpose of making it look as if he were thus prevented from the murder. The trouble is that this circular reasoning finally leads nowhere. It is the sort of Hitchcockesque solution to life's mysteries which is too clever by half—too clever to be all of it, anyway: too clever to be truth. It is in the end only one of several explanations for who murders this hit-and-run driver that is hated by his own family even more than by the father of the child he killed. And Chabrol gives us no means to solve the mystery either. We never do know who committed the murder, but only who takes the blame. Chabrol thus respects the pluralism and insolubility of life, and forces us to live with them too.

A similar enlarging and surpassing occurs in the way that Chabrol has been influenced by Howard Hawks. Hawks' favorite treatment of any piece of material is to play it the opposite of the way that might at first seem most natural. If a scene seems inherently comic, then he might play it for sentiment and tears. If it is tragic, he might play it for laughs. In *The Big Sky*, for instance, there's a scene where Kirk Douglas has to have a crushed finger amputated in the middle of the wilderness without anaesthetic. But Hawks' approach is for Douglas to get drunk first and turn the operation into a comedy of errors. As I said last week, style is all.

Here again, though, Chabrol goes his mentor one better. He sees life not as a free choice between comedy and tragedy, but as an inseparable mixture of the two. Instead of playing one against the other, like Hawks, he plays both at once. At the end of *La Rupture*, the tragic murder of Hélène's husband thus becomes a part of her giddy, drug-induced hallucinations. As I also said last week, Chabrol does such things in order to match in his films the conditions of life as he finds them. The complete moral ambivalence of modern life can be fittingly represented only by a perfect ambiguity in art. This has been the fundamental insight implicit in Chabrol's whole career.

Nowhere has Chabrol realized this dual vision of his more fully than in *Just Before Nightfall*. Here once again Chabrol creates art from the impossibility of modern man's ever suffering with the dignity of his Greek forebears. The main locations are two exquisite

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suburban homes which Chabrol has clearly chosen for the severity and formality of their design. The protagonists in this drama are people who literally walk marble halls. Yet when one of them murders the wife of another, the tortuous, metaphysical working out of his guilt which follows, is, though moving, also absurd. Having escaped detection, but unable to bear his secret, the murderer, Charles (Michel Bouquet), confesses to his wife (Stephane Audran). But she is so ready to forgive that it makes her reluctant to hear him out, and he finally has to force his confession on her. Consequently he is put in the position of having to invite retribution almost as his dead mistress invited abuse before he killed her. Guilt becomes indistinguishable from masochism. The moral and immoral act begin to look ludicrously alike. The libido and the superego reveal that identity—or is it confusion?—which they have for us all.

In an act of contrition that really does seem almost perverse, Charles then confesses to the dead woman's husband, who is also his best friend. The scene occurs as the two take a walk during, appropriately, that darkling, uncertain half-light just before nightfall. When even the dead woman's husband cannot despise Charles, he contemplates suicide, but cannot bring himself to it. In his circumspect way he therefore pleads with his wife for help, but does she yield or not?

That night when getting him the laudanum he always takes before bed, she measures out the draught drop by drop as we have seen him do before. Aren't there more drops this time, though? Those drops falling into the glass symbolize perfectly the imperceptible ways in which human action can be altered. Which drop is the crucial one? It is impossible to say. It falls into the glass before we even know what is happening, just as Charles once crossed over from a ritual sex game to murder without realizing it. When life is viewed closely enough so that we can see those drops falling into the glass one by one—viewed as closely as it always must be in films—the moral lines that seemed so clear from the seats in the Greek amphitheater simply dissolve.

There is a certain shot that Chabrol has devised—I didn't see it in *Just Before Nightfall*, but it's in several earlier films—where the camera dollies away from the characters while the lens zooms in on them again, the one motion deftly balancing out the other. Chabrol used this shot in *Le Boucher*, and at the end of *La Femme Infidèle* where it represents the husband's point of view, being drawn closer than ever to his family at the very moment he is being led away from them by the police. This shot is a gesture of ambiguity, that same ambiguity which affirms itself in different ways at the end of *This Man Must Die*, *La Rupture* and *Just Before Nightfall*. It is a shot that achieves a certain unity of stasis and motion much as the final turning-down of the chorus—literally, its catastrophe—does at the end of the tragic drama. As I said several weeks ago, when writing about Truffaut, only the most able artist is capable of being absorbed completely, single-mindedly, in the working out of one, grand theme. From the isolated camera shot in any one of Chabrol's films to the general conception that seems to dominate all of them, Chabrol shows himself to be such an artist.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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BIRON WALKER

DO AS I DO, NOT AS I SAY

It will not pay
to acquire in your sole name
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in Righteousness, Ltd.

Better business to be good and wrong.
You too can get being wrong down right.
If you study on it and work hard enough,
no more reason for you
than for others to fail.

Don't look beyond the end of your nose—
closer still if the nose is the nose
of your kin or next-door neighbor.
Turn back no more than halfway up
any farseeing hill with its full view,
that prospect seductive with I-told-you-so.

Shut your eyes and open your mouth;
with closed eyes and open mouth,
you are sure to put your foot in it—
a posture much approved by those
with neither foot on the ground.
Breathe easy near all proud owners' premises of straw;
praise them behind their back and louder to their faces,
never mind the second mortgage's interest rate.

Perfect and then parade in public
some endearing blemish—dandruff,
tar, or, better, dung on your shoe.
You can extend no comfort under the sun
To compare with that afforded to your fellow,
with his doubts about his seat above the salt,
by the subordinating berry seeds
unpicked between your two front teeth.

Abstain from the appearance of evil.
Astroturf will be unrolled to your feet
and a halo set on your head
all the days of your years
and then some.

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MEDIA

For network producers, there is still a distinction between "drama" and "movies" on TV. "Drama" conjures up those intense, stage-oriented works of long ago on "Studio One" or "Kraft Theater" which were televised from a studio and so were necessarily full of words rather than physical action, direct human confrontations across the kitchen table. TV "movies," today's form, are done on film and have very few words and a great deal of action, mostly involving helicopters. Our TV screens, however, although brighter and more colorful than they used to be, are still not movie screens, and the clattering capers and chases which now pursue one another from channel to channel, while sometimes fun, are not really comfortable yet in our living rooms. The medium is somehow not up to all those helicopters, and the virtues of television which we used to see in the old "dramas"—the observation of minutiae, the discovery of high drama in a small gesture—are often ignored.

There are exceptions, of course. Many of the popular British series on the Public Broadcasting Service (*The Forsyte Saga, Cousin Bette* etc.) are studio dramas, expertly produced. The cameras draw our attention mainly to faces and the interaction of people. In another style, *Sticks and Bones*, Joseph Papp's production of the David Rabe play which CBS finally slipped on the air one hot August night when nobody was home, was in fact made on film, but it was brilliantly geared for television. The director, Robert Downey, used all kinds of film montage effects, but with a perfect sense of how they would look on the tube. It was one of the best *TV* shows ever.

"Playhouse 90" is a distinguished name from the old days of studio TV drama, and CBS has continued to produce programs under this title from time to time. On Thursday November 29, "Playhouse 90" is presenting *Catholics*, an adaptation of Brian Moore's short novel of the same name. Although this show will preempt the usual "CBS Thursday Night Movies," it is itself a movie—filmed on location rather than taped in a studio—and it even features a helicopter. But it is described as a "dramatic special," and its special status probably derives from the fact that it was expensively produced, it focuses on people rather than capers, and it deals with a heavy subject, by TV standards.

The plot of *Catholics* is a sort of fable about the Church in the near future. A with-it American priest (Martin Sheen) is sent from Rome to an abbey in a forsaken part of Ireland with orders to shape up the monks. It seems they have been saying Mass in Latin, hearing confessions, reciting grace before meals, and observing other devotions which have been banned by the recent Council, Vatican IV. These activities have attracted thousands of pilgrims and caused a great commotion. The situation has displeased the "Ecumen brotherhood" and it even threatens to disrupt the imminent *rapprochement* between Christianity and Buddhism. To straighten this out, the efficient priest must confront the elderly abbot (Trevor Howard) who clings to the faith of yesteryear even though (or perhaps because) he himself, as it turns out, has been having doubts about his own faith for some years now.

There is obviously a lot of resonance in this tale for any viewer who has weathered Vatican II, much less Vatican IV. The author's predictions about the future trappings of Catholicism are fun and not entirely farfetched: Lourdes is closed, the sign of the cross is out (offensive to the Buddhists), and Church-led revolutions have reformed Latin America's political structure. But more important, as the bluntness of his title suggests, Mr. Moore is wading into the middle of the Church's troubled emotional waters, without worrying about doctrinal subtleties or nice distinctions. He is out to stir up waves of nostalgia and he comes near to succeeding.

The show falters because the cards are stacked too obviously. As noted, this is a fable, but it is set realistically, and so the viewer is nagged by realistic holes and improbabilities. The story sets up a polarization between two extremes which seems so fundamentally *unnecessary* that we have a hard time getting caught up by it. The Church, as the priest represents it, is solely an instrument of social action; worship is no more than a pious gesture, and indeed God, it seems, does not come into the picture too often. (But the priest is not clear on this —is he worried about the *Latin* Mass, or the Mass itself?) The monks, for their part, are an extraordinarily picturesque lot—making jam, rescuing lost lambs, and parading through the halls at odd times waving an incense thurible and singing "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name." They react to the helicopter with all the wonder of a new-found tribe of pygmies in the Philippine jungle, and indeed their approach to life and theology is as pristine as any aborigine's. All they can say about their faith is that it depends on a belief in "miracles"; they offer no arguments in its defense—they appear not to have thought about it. And yet Mr. Moore has posited a Vatican IV which, in an atmosphere of enormous emotional and intellectual foment, has completely altered the nature of the Church. Where were the monks?

I came away with the feeling that, under other circumstances, the whole matter could have been straightened out quite easily by reasonable people over a bowl of Irish tea and some homemade soda bread with jam. But this priest is insensitively dumb, and the monks are invincibly childish. This isn't drama, it's pure bad luck.

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Having said this, I must return to the fact that parts of the story are provocative and sometimes even moving. This is because the producers have found in Ireland some beautiful monastic locations for their cameras: the mysteries of the contemplative life are quietly and eloquently suggested by these spare buildings and ancient rocks more than by the script. Even more significant is the performance of Trevor Howard as the abbot, which is alone worth the effort of turning on the TV set. Where Brian Moore's dialogue is rhetorical, Trevor Howard's face is realistic. It is one of the most realistic faces we have, a tough face, but full of lines and vulnerable angles. Fundamentally, Mr. Howard conveys intelligence; he holds our attention by the expression of his *mind*, and his ultimate confession of doubt, for example, is moving because we seem to be witnessing the authentic anxiety of an authentically spiritual person. The end of the story, where the abbot attempts—and fails?—to pray again, is somewhat embarrassing, but Mr. Howard keeps his dignity even here.

Perhaps "drama" on TV means, for one thing, that the viewer has the chance to watch a good actor act. (I still remember King Stanley, Lee J. Cobb, Julie Harris and others confronting one another across the kitchen tables of early television.) In that sense, *Catholics* is a drama in the old vein. Mr. Howard gives dimension to what is at heart an ambitious potboiler.

MICHAEL MURRAY

BOOKS

A VISIT TO GREENELAND

DENIS DONOGHUE

The Honorary Consul

GRAHAM GREENE

Simon & Schuster, $7.95

In the fourth part of *The Honorary Consul* a minor Argentinian novelist Jorge Julio Saavedra, throwing open the door of his grubby apartment, says to his acquaintance Dr. Plarr: "Here you are at the heart of what my critics call the world of Saavedra." Dr. Plarr notes, in silence, that "it was indeed a very small world." A reader of *The Honorary Consul* might be forgiven for taking it as making a world at once small and familiar: it has all the characteristics of what Mr. Greene's critics call Greeneland, the usual cast of bad Catholics, bad writers, drunken diplomats, fallen priests, well-run brothels, well-run police stations, inept idealists, amateur theologians, and in the wings a dimly discerned figure called, for want of a better name, God. It sounds like the mixture as before, the ingredients *The Power and the Glory, The Comedians,* and a dash of *Travels with My Aunt* for fun. It is set in Argentina, and on a clear day a reader could see straight across the great river and into the trees of Paraguay where the black Wordsworth of *Travels with My Aunt* is still lying murdered, victim of the romance of Aunt Augusta and Mr. Visconti.

A reader who receives the new book in this spirit may easily be forgiven, especially by Mr. Greene, who has always been anxious to forgive. Besides, such a reader could say to Mr. Greene, as Bertrand Russell threatened to say to God, "You did not give me enough evidence." Or rather, "You misled me, starting with that old Greene plot. You pretended to be merely writing a Greene as Agatha Christie writes an Agatha Christie." Even in a secular court of law, the reader would claim to have been abused in plot, setting, and characters. The plot is an absurd revolutionary plan to kidnap an American Ambassador and hold him for ransom; absurd in the event, and not at all redeemed by the fact that recent history has endorsed his fiction. Instead of the Ambassador, a wretched Honorary Consul is kidnapped, poor Charley Fortnum, who counts for nothing except eventually to the reader. In setting, Mr. Greene has tricked the reader, giving him a minor city in Argentina where, as usual, anything can happen. As for the characters: Dr. Plarr, Greene's man; Dr. Humphries, a foolish Englishman; Father Leon Rivas, a gunman incapable of pulling a trigger; Aquino, only less inept; Clara, withdrawn from Senora Sanchez's brothel to become Fortnum's wife and Plarr's mistress; Plarr's dreadful mother stuffing herself with eclairs in Buenos Aires. Surely we cannot be reading anything but the new Graham Greene, already a Book-of-the-Month-Club selection and a godsend for possessors of a Christmas book-token.

But the verdict is premature. *The Honorary Consul* is not merely more of the same Greene. The hand of the Old Master is indeed evident, there are scenes which only he could have written; the hilarious conversation between Plarr and his mother in the Richmond Cafe, or the scene between Plarr, Humphries, and Saavedra in which Saavedra refuses to join in sending a telegram to the London *Times* in an attempt to save poor Fortnum, his reason being entirely stylistic—the whole literate world would know that he had played no part in the composition of such banal prose. These are set-pieces, and only Mr. Greene could have set them. They are points of light in a picture for the most part dark. Otherwise put: they are intermittent sounds of gaiety and non-

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chalance in one of Mr. Greene's darkest comedies. If the book required a subtitle, I would suggest for Mr. Greene's attention: *Measure for Measure*, or *Machismo for Machismo*. In any event I want to account for the strange tone which the book leaves in the mind.

It comes mostly from Dr. Plarr, Greene's man in the sense that he is the only character in the book to whom Greene ascribes, with clear normative intent, extreme scepticism in the presence of emotion and its common signs. Dr. Plarr holds suspect "any emotion which is curable by means as simple as an orgasm or an eclair." The sentence, "I love you," sounds to him merely a phrase of the theater and in any case probably a lie. "He had always been able to attribute the emotion he felt to a quite different malady—to loneliness, pride, physical desire, or even a simple sense of curiosity." Dr. Plarr is not voluble, the syntax of his feeling requires short sentences surrounded by a form of silence in which nothing is said because nothing presents itself as worth saying in the circumstances. I take the doctor as doing Greene's work, clearing a dark space between each character: the spaces are filled by a common sense of life, a feeling for the way things are, a sense of pity, malice, terror, active in silence. As the dialogue keeps the speakers apart rather than bringing them together, it is the function of speech to mark limits and boundaries rather than to transcend them. I have an impression that if God had consulted Mr. Greene on the domestic arrangements of the world the novelist would have urged Him to allow people, as a general rule, to live their own lives, mind their own business, put up with their loneliness. Eating people is wrong, especially that form of cannibalism which presents itself as communication.

I offer as evidence, therefore, the fact that Dr. Plarr, like Mr. Greene, prefers silence to speech unless something needs to be said; that he contains himself and respects those who go about their business, doing the best they can. I put in evidence also the fact that the most intimate and the most powerful relationships in the book are ascribed to people who have been separated from one another for years; especially to fathers and sons. When Pablo, one of the conspirators, says, "I love this house, I had nothing else but the house left when my wife and child died," Dr. Plarr answers, but silently, "Yet another father, are we never going to finish with fathers?" Plarr is never going to finish with his own, whom he has not seen in twenty years: he broods over his father both before and after he hears that the poor man was shot in Paraguay while trying to escape from the police. Mothers get a bad press in *The Honorary Consul*, unless they keep quiet or speak when spoken to in subdued Guarani. But fathers are inescapable, they haunt the book, especially when they do not appear at all in their own persons. Charley Fortnum's father does not appear, but he has never left his son's consciousness. "Father. Father. Father. The word repeated itself in his mind. He had a vision of his father sitting bewildered, not understanding, not recognising him, by the dumbwaiter, while he lay on the ground and the horse stood over him." Marta calls the priest, her husband, Father. Plarr *père* is nearly more important than Plarr *fils*. And, to return to the plot, the suspense of wondering whether or not Charley will survive, escaping from the kidnappers, is nothing compared to that of wondering will he ever discover that not he, but Dr. Plarr, is the father of Clara's child. (Yes, he finds out.)

I have emphasized this motif because it sustains, according to my reading, the tone of the entire book. I take it to mean that the void between father and child, and the child's feeling, stretching across time and silence to touch the lost father, testify to Greene's present sense of life itself. Like the novel, I leave until the end any direct reference to the father of all fathers, Our Father in Heaven. Plarr and the priest have a good deal to say of that Father when other themes have lost their savor. "If God would only give me a little pain," Plarr's father is supposed to have said, pain being preferable to boredom. At the end, he got his pain: he was given that grace, and the consolation of coming to the end of himself only when he was old; not, until the end, a burnt-out case. God is sometimes good. But more often than not Greene's God is a black comedian, shrewd, complicated in His ways, incalculable, the joker in the pack. If there is a void between one character and another, the void between God the Father and man His son is absolute. Christ does not come into Mr. Greene's fiction very often these days; his role as mediator is little more than a walk-on part. Some people somehow get the cup of their deserving. Charley Fortnum survives to get an O.B.E. from Her Majesty the Queen, for whatever good that will bring him. More to the point, he survives long enough to discover that "someone he loved would survive." Mr. Greene does not pretend to understand survival any better than disaster. A few people survive the general mess of things, perhaps because in some inexplicable way they have earned that prize.

Few Comforts or Surprises: The Arkansas Delta

EUGENE RICHARDS

M. I. T. Press, $9.95

TODD GITLIN

We—white and Northern—don't hear very much from the black South any more. A decade ago, news from the Mississippi Delta and the Georgia hinterland, of poverty and racism and the struggles against them, was written in capital letters on our mental ticker-tape of History. In the intervening decade we have learned that history works in stranger, more all-absorbing terms than we expected; have learned that we ourselves are also victims and that the American poison seeps across oceans and into Northern cities and

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everywhere, in fact, we look. Of course it is not only abstract history that has changed, but the susceptibilities and interests of mass media as well. When there was a coherent Southwide protest movement of the likes of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Council to be reported, the Northern media paid attention. Now we are given to assume, by the paucity of reporting, that the South has somehow healed itself; the appropriate civil rights laws have been passed, and don't the statistics report that poverty is disappearing?

But what we take for progress may rather be malignant neglect, by media as well as government. The New South is also the Nixon South. Eugene Richards, in his book of photographs, reports these newspaper headlines, from 1971-72, in southeastern Arkansas:

MADISON ELECTS FULL BLACK SLATE
FIVE PERSONS WOUNDED IN KKK-POLICE FIGHT IN MADISON
COTTON PLANT ELECTS BLACK MAYOR
BLACK WALKOUT AT BRINKLEY SCHOOLS
MARIANNA BOYCOTT STILL ON
POLICEMAN KILLS FORREST CITY BLACK, MARCH HELD, SELECTIVE BUYING BEGINS
MYSTERIOUS FIRE AGAIN DESTROYS FORREST CITY CHURCH
FIRST BLACK ON WEST MEMPHIS SCHOOL BOARD

Progress and reaction, movement and repression. And the most poor are still poor. Sixty percent of the black families there earn $2000 a year or less.

Richards' photographs of blacks and their places in southeastern Arkansas are for the most part vivid and sensitive. The faces are the most revealing: half-smiles, as if to indicate hope against hope; torment; defeat; and the doomed gaiety of children. There is the stoic and watchful waiting of the Reverend Ezra Greer, addressing a crowd at the state capitol; the suspicious strength of convicts at the state penitentiary; the stony set of jaws, the suffering tenacity of most of these people. Occasionally, mysteriously, there is a smile that absorbs the whole face, that speaks of an understanding beyond tenacity, a commitment beyond the seemingly possible. But what is shocking are the faces of children who have a sadness of centuries, of being sold into slavery, of being trapped; who have already seen into the grave. A child lost in unspeakable anguish clutches the head of a white doll: so much anguish it is almost joy. Richards makes funerals and prison the centerpiece of his collection, and for good reason. It is possible, I suppose, to sit back and speculate that these people have, after all, their strengths and consolations: the church and whiskey, primarily. There are even traces of these consolations, the "few comforts." But the rest of the book indicates their limits. These people are waiting: for what?

Occasionally there are glimpses. There is a soldier; there are also a couple preparing to get married in African dress. There is a demonstration over school issues. Blacks are elected to government. Unfortunately, Richards does not tell us how widespread, how promising are these "few surprises." "On and on," he writes, "each morning the last morning. Worn-out shoes, few comforts or surprises, dissolve blood and bone to little deaths." "Little deaths": Pablo Neruda used precisely those words in an early section of his poem "The Heights of Macchu Picchu," a sort of paraphrase, in its beginning, of "The Waste Land." Neruda pointed beyond that reality and diverged sharply from Eliot in the closing sections of his poem, evoking the history of Latin American political insurgency and the luminous promise of revolution. Admittedly it is hard to make such a leap in a book of photographs, and harder still to imagine a revolutionary change that would sweep beyond the Arkansas delta as well as into it. Richards frees reality and blurs the present into the past. The poor may not always be with us, but here, right now, they are.

Richards came to the Arkansas Delta as a VISTA volunteer, and now works in an organization called RESPECT,

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Inc., "a private social-action program providing paralegal services, publishing a community newspaper, and distributing food and clothing," according to the blurb. Unfortunately the book's scanty text tells us nothing about the possibilities and limits of such an organization, although there is ample evidence from other sources that similar operations may work to reinforce the clients' dependency and militate against self-directing mass movement.

Without political pointers to the future, we are left with the raw present, the terror and the pity of it. Richards' photographs have that eloquence which insists on the present. When the future is obscure, that is all we have left.

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Did I Say That?

JOHN L. McKENZIE

The Thomas More Press, $7.95

EDWARD GLYNN

This is a book that frequently is brilliant and profound in its insights, biting in its sarcasm and sharp in its wit. Despite the presence of these desirable qualities it is, however, a book that as a whole does not make rewarding reading and thus does not strongly recommend itself. The main reason for this is that, in a world where changes increasingly occur more and more rapidly, books composed of previously published topical articles become increasingly more rapidly what they already are—non-books.

This one is a collection of thirty-one disconnected essays that John L. McKenzie originally published separately in *The Critic* magazine. With minor editorial changes most of them appear just as they did in his "Q.E.D." column, which he began writing regularly for *The Critic* in the Dec. 1966/Jan. 1967 issue. In that format the essays made delightfully rewarding reading but now, published together in book form, these discussions of the timely topics of six, five, four years ago often bore, even though coming from the provocative pen of McKenzie. The author's past responses to and past evaluations of past events and issues are not in themselves of present interest for most readers. McKenzie's present response to and present evaluation of present events and issues or of even some of these past events and issues would be of far more present interest.

The essays vary widely in subject matter. Their quality also differs. The more general ones tend to be the more thoughtful and profound, e.g., "The State in Christian Perspective" and "Evaluating the Deluge Myth." It is significant that these two which are of superior quality were not "Q.E.D." columns but articles published in *The Critic* in 1964—the former with an editorial introduction that the article "may be one of the most controversial articles we have ever published." That comment reveals how much has changed since 1964.

Most of the other essays deal with the issues and events that were prominent at the time of publication: "Not Only Present, But Involved" is a 1968 essay that was prompted by a reading of Norman Mailer's *The Armies of the Night*. (McKenzie, rather arrogantly, writes: "I was, being unacquainted with his work, somewhat surprised to find that Mailer can write.") "Another Galileo Case" is a 1968 reflection on the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* and its effects. "One Man's Revolt" contains 1967 reflections on James Kavanaugh's book *A Modern Priest Looks at His Outdated Church* and on the response that reviewers were giving to it. "Oh, the Majesty and the Mystery" is a 1968 piece written in response to an article of William Buckley arguing that the reformed liturgy was a vulgarization. Three articles appearing on the same day in the Chicago *Daily News* prompted a 1972 article on sexual morality—"And the Two . . . Remain Two."

To evaluate the essays in themselves and not in their present form one must consider McKenzie's original purpose in writing them. He stated this in his inaugural "Q.E.D." column, which is not part of this collection. "The gentlemen who publish this journal have invited me to write whatever I please on anything I please. They should be happy to know that I recognize the unspoken reservations in this franchise. I have no intention of tackling Viet Nam or the problem of inflation. I have views on these and similar questions but I do not think they deserve publication. I assume I was invited to write this column because I am a theologian." Thus his columns of "theological journalism" and "theological commentary" began.

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With typical McKenzie wit he expressed some of the inhibitions he felt as a theologian in writing such a column. "I can scarcely be as pompous as Walter Lippmann. . . . I hope I shall not hang as much crepe as Joseph Alsop." The nearest thing to a model that he saw was the late Bernard De Voto who "was arrogant, testy, sarcastic, provoking, brilliant almost without fail, and never dull." In their original form the essays did approach this. Unfortunately, in the present format they do not.

Rembrandt's Hat

BERNARD MALAMUD

Farrar, Straus, $6.95

The World of Apples

JOHN CHEEVER

Knopf, $5.95

ROBERT PHILLIPS

In reviewing these two already widely-reviewed short story collections late in the season, I'm tempted to review the reviewers as well as the books. The Malamud collection has met a somewhat mixed press. (The daily *New York Times* reviewer was by turns condescending and hostile.) The Cheever book has, on the other hand, received wild hosannas and comparisons with Chekov. Yet I maintain that *Rembrandt's Hat* is more important, and contains a number of stories as fine as any Malamud has written, while *The World of Apples* is as important to the Cheever canon as a carbon copy is to its bright original. So there appears justification for another look at the two collections.

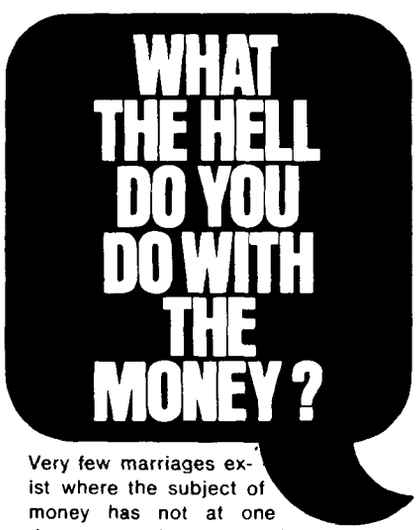
Malamud's book is exactly that: not a "collection" of various short pieces, but a tightly-woven tapestry composed of letters and hats, depicting loss of faith and lack of communication in our time. It is a book in which fathers fight wars in their heads and die of cancer of the heart. The two themes, spiritual isolation and failure of communication, pervade all eight stories, but nowhere more successfully than in "The Silver Crown." Here a faithless son turns to faithhealing as a last attempt to save his dying father, for whom he has done nothing in his lifetime. The retired rabbi to whom the son turns is most surely a fake, but the son is too faithless even to test him. When the son impetuously curses the father, and the old man dies—as he most assuredly would have, anyway—it is the son who has failed, and not the healing rabbi.

"The Letter" and "My Son the Murderer" also explore father-son relationships. The former is set in a mental institution, symbolic of our own estrangement from the world about us. The institutionalized man's letter is, in fact, four sheets of empty paper, a potent symbol for the absence of communication between father and son, ourselves and the world. "My Son the Murderer" treats the same failures. This time a son worries about the Vietnam war while his father worries about his worrying. A stolen letter figures in this story (as it does in another, "In Retirement," and also in "Notes from a Lady at a Dinner Party" —a less successful story of an unfulfilled woman who writes her "letters to the world.") But it is a windblown hat, one of the many headpieces in the book, which objectifies emotion here: the old hat which the father pursues up and down the beach is as elusive as the bond between himself and his son.

"The Silver Crown" is unreal, but insists upon being taken as an emblem of faith. In "Rembrandt's Hat," the sculptor Ruben's white hat is quite real, and also a faith emblem. In it he appeared the artist he hoped to become. The tale pits a highly sensitive maker versus an insensitive critic, and if lack of communication is the theme of "The Letter," miscommunication is the subject here. Each man seems incapable of fathoming the other. The art historian is a better judge of paintings than of people; the sculptor a better maker of objects than of friends. Each feels the cause is, quite literally, on the other's head.

An attempt at communication with the young is made by a retired doctor in "In Retirement." His effort is a disaster, and the story ends in an epiphany when the man is plummeted into the old age he had previously managed to ignore. Yet another thwarted communication is at the core of "Man in the Drawer," Malamud's longest story and perhaps the least successful because it attempts too much. In the Russian writer's desire to have his stories smuggled out of his country, and the American tourist's trial of faith in his own inability to do anything for others, we see Malamud's old concerns, but stated too baldly. (Cheever's story resulting from his own State Department-sponsored trip to Russia, "Artemis, the Honest Well Digger," is a better assimilation of travel and travail.)

Malamud's most original accomplishment in years is "Talking Horse," which crowns this collection. The other stories focus on communication failures between man and man; "Talking Horse" is a fine allegory on the strug-



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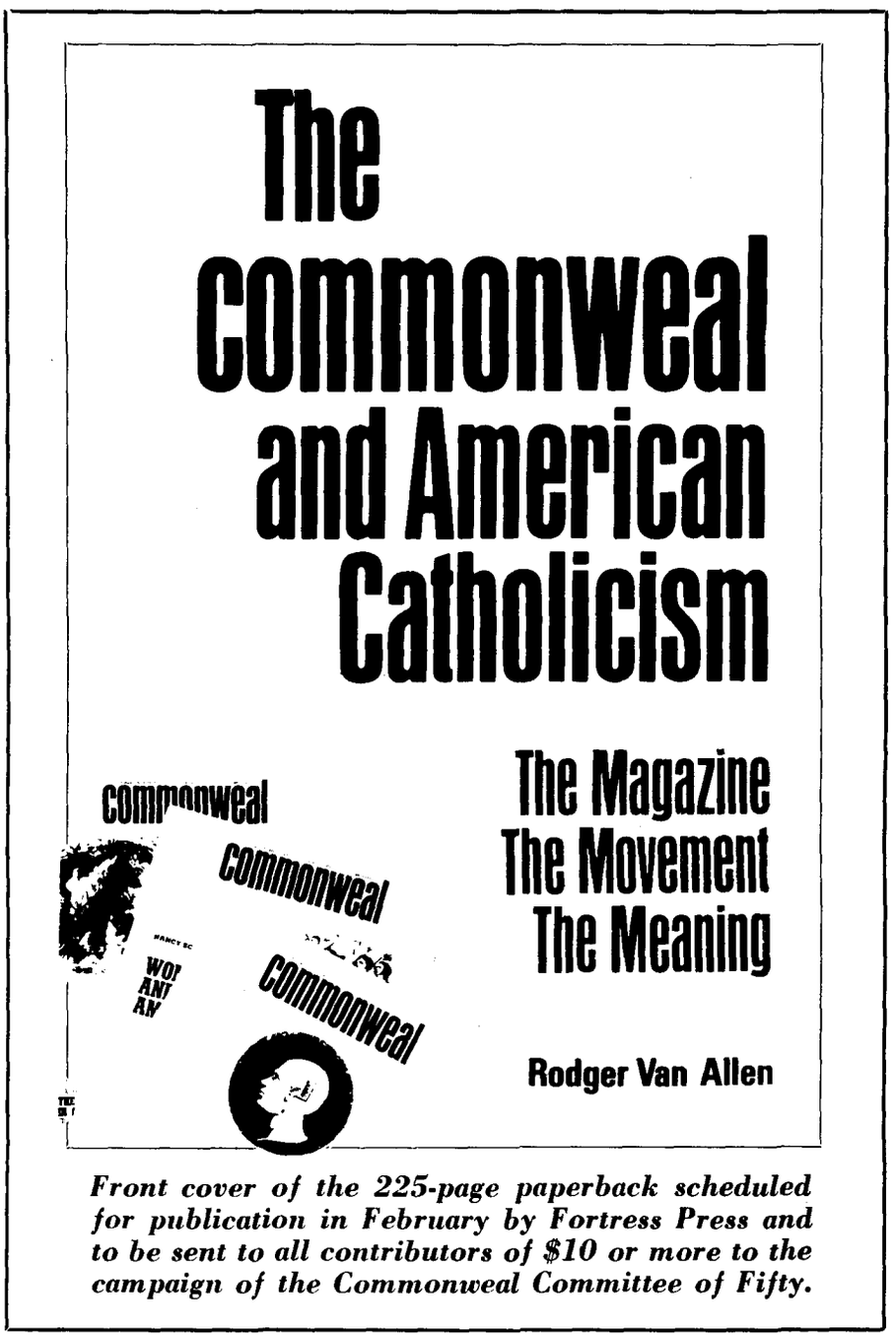
gle between man and God. It shimmers with implications on the unknowable nature of truth, and the problems of the animal yoked to the spiritual. Malamud's God is a deaf-mute horse-owner named Goldberg, and man is a being trapped inside the awkward body of a horse called Abramowitz. Abramowitz has been there for years, and still does not understand the nature of his fate: Goldberg-God does not talk to him very often if at all, and seems to punish him a great deal. The worst punishment of all, however, is "when you don't know what you have to know." After all, "He has his mysteries." This is more than a fascinating fantasy. It is an Existential statement on man's search for identity and freedom. In Abramowitz's need to take things on faith, and thus redeem himself, he reminds us of no one more than the son in the first story, "The Silver Crown," with the collection coming full circle.

Nowhere in *The World of Apples* do we find such levity. Even the title story, which focuses upon a poet's loss of faith in the world and therefore in himself, does not move the reader in the way Malamud's spiritual pilgrims do. Is this due to Cheever's determined eccentricities? His indefatigable good humor? With one or two exceptions, these stories chronicle the sadness and futility of suburban and moneyed existences. In several the sound of the rain is intended as a balm for the bruised spirits of those grown more accustomed to the sounds of traffic. And perhaps this is one of Cheever's shortcomings. Writing strictly of one class, his books cannot compare with those attempting a Balzacian cross-section of humanity. Malamud is no Balzac, and writes most often about the poor. But *Rembrandt's Hat* is also populated with successful architects and professors, doctors and students. Cheever's humor and irony make him a greater writer than, say, Louis Auchincloss, whose humorless novels also examine the professional classes to the exclusion of all others. But the limitation is there.

Loneliness of course knows no class barrier, and it is this state which is Cheever's subject. The husband who loses his wife to the off-Broadway stage, the American tourist who loses his Russian beloved through interference of the State Department, and the husband who loses his wife to a phantom lover are all outdone by the hero of "The Chimera," whose marriage is so unhappy he conjures up a demon lover of his own, but whose masochism is also so great he loses even her. Another protagonist, in "The Geometry of Love," desperately seeks "radiance, beauty, and order, no less," and all he finds is a world in which kittens get murdered in Waring blenders.

That kitten in the blender is symptomatic of what else might be "wrong" with this collection. What formerly had been the telling detail for Cheever has, in these late stories, become a mannerism. (Would any woman *really* hang her diamonds out on the line to dry?) The eccentric actions in these rambling reminiscences have become almost Gothic: full chamberpots are



Front cover of the 225-page paperback scheduled for publication in February by Fortress Press and to be sent to all contributors of $10 or more to the campaign of the Commonweal Committee of Fifty.

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thrown in husband's faces, husbands defecate in their wive's dresser drawers; daughters unwittingly murder their mothers. Moreover, in four of these twelve stories, Cheever's plots depend upon the meanest kind of trick for their denouement: a servant discerns the employer she has hated all her days is her mother; a man trying to proposition a woman on an airplane is actually her husband; etc.

Ah, but the title story! I can hear those say who already have read most of the reviews of *The World of Apples*. For it is said to be one of Cheever's best. Well, it is and it isn't. In its portrait of old Asa Bascomb, expatriate American poet comprised of ¾ Frost and ¼ Pound, Cheever has created a potentially remarkable character, and one quite different from his melancholy suburban husbands. Asa, whose poetry is said to contain "the pungency, diversity, color, and nostalgia of the apples of the Northern New England he had not seen for forty years," suddenly finds himself smitten by a compulsion for smut. He writes dirty limericks, ballads, finally nothing at all but dirty words. Fair enough. It is in his overnight conversion back to the pontifical Santa Claus of American poetry which strains credibility. Such rapid changes in character do, we know, sometimes occur in life. But life is, as someone said, stranger than fiction. As a cautionary tale for one man's search to recapture that which he has lost—in Asa's case, the capacity for spirituality—the story is ambitious. But ultimately lacks credibility. Just possibly the quick-change act which has become Cheever's stock-in-trade—the suburban housewife suddenly turned off-Broadway nude actress, the promising pianist who comes to hate music—has become affectation and self-imitation. *The World of Apples* is an enormously entertaining book, but it is a throwback to the somewhat trivial *The Way Some People Live* (1943), rather than a companion volume to *The Enormous Radio*, which in retrospect is Cheever's best.

REVIEWERS

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 227)

I see no reason for the sententiousness and sensationalism of such a statement as "we . . . owe him the experience of our own evil." It has not been established and may never be demonstrated satisfactorily whether Mr. Nixon merely exhibited remarkably poor judgment or was guilty of gross political immorality in what has come to be known as Watergate.

But whatever the real motives are, they are motives attributable to a Nixonian elite of tremendous power dazzled by their own self-importance. If the evil generated by this elite is not unique it is still different enough from the various evils that the rest of us are either capable of or guilty of to point up the speciousness of Mr. Novak's analysis.

If we have evil ways to be amended then we should know what these evil ways are. We can't personify them in Papa Dick who likened us in his warm post-election glow to children in a (his?) family. We should remember also that a significant number of Americans have seen no justification for Vietnam for many years. It is ridiculous to associate them with Nixon's "Peace With Honor" cant.

Could it be that in his haste to say something about Watergate Mr. Novak has overreacted to the polls and current comment? Are "innocence" and a belief in "values sacred" to Americans the real explanations for the widespread reaction to Wategate? How about genuine concern for basic decency or morbid curiosity or a mixture of both?

ROLAND LAIRD

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